

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Chief Financial Officer

Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Linda W. Cropp
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer

DATE: June 10, 2003

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement: "Marriage and Family Therapy
Amendment Act of 2003"

REFERENCE: Bill Number – 15-179

Conclusion

Funds are not sufficient in the proposed FY 2004 through FY 2007 budget and financial plan as agreed to by the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia to implement the proposed legislation. **The proposed legislation would result in \$437,345 additional expenditures for the District in FY 2004 through FY 2007.**

Anti-deficiency laws, 31-USCA § 1341 (2000), prohibit District officers and employees from exceeding agency appropriations in any fiscal year. Should the Department of Health determine that funding is available to absorb the additional costs in FY 2003, then the net impact would be zero for that year. For subsequent years, the additional expenditure would need to be included as budgeted expenditures.

Background

The proposed legislation would require marriage and family therapists to be licensed and would establish a five-member Board of Marriage and Family Therapy, appointed by the Mayor, to regulate the practice of such therapists. The Board would administer the examination required for licensure, verify the educational requirements and set any additional requirements through regulations. In addition, the proposed bill would prohibit therapists licensed under this act from disclosing any information obtained while rendering therapy except in specified circumstances, make such therapists not competent to testify in alimony or divorce action with information acquired during the therapeutic

relationship, and provide licensed therapists with immunity from liability for patient actions under certain circumstances.

Financial Plan Impact

In order to perform the work of the proposed Board of Marriage and Family Therapy, the Health Professional Licensing Administration (HPLA) would need to hire two additional staff members – a Health Licensing Specialist and an Investigator. Both new personnel would be at DS – 301 11/5 at an annual salary of \$44,918 plus benefits. In addition to the increased personnel costs, HPLA would incur some increased costs to support the administration of the licensing program. However, it is expected that those costs will be offset by licensing and application fees.

Impact to the District's Budget and Financial Plan				
FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	Total
\$103,761	\$107,392	\$111,151	\$115,041	\$437,345